

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 AID-20 PC-04 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01

PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 COME-00 EB-11 FRB-02

TRSE-00 XMB-07 OPIC-12 CIEP-02 LAB-06 SIL-01 OMB-01

SPM-01 AGR-20 NEA-10 ACDA-19 IO-14 DRC-01 /249 W

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P R 271300Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7893

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L OUAGADOUGOU 859

EO 11652: NA

TAGS: PINT, PDEV, EGEN, UV

SUBJECT: QUARTERLY REPORT ON VOLTAN SITUATION

REF: OUAGA 115, 346

AS REQUESTED BY AF, FOLLOWING ARE LEADING DEVELOPMENTS AND TRENDS IN UPPER VOLTA AS BACKGROUND FOR MONTHLY REPORT TO THE SECRETARY.

1. NEW REGIME INSTALLED BY PRESIDENT LAMIZANA'S MILITARY TAKE-OVER FEB 8("NATIONAL RENEWAL GOVERNMENT") HAS YET TO CREATE DISTINCTIVE IMAGE FOR ITSELF OR TO FORGE REAL LINK WITH THE PEOPLE. VISIBLE ACTIVITY TO DATE LIMITED TO FLURRY OF APPOINTMENTS, RENEWED DEDICATION TO HARD WORK AND SPEECHES WITH SOME OVERTONES OF "AUTHENTICITY."HOWEVER, REGIME HAS BEEN STUDYING PROPOSED COURSES OF ACTION, VIA MILITARY COMMITTEE HEADED BY PROGRESSIVE MIN YOUTH TIENTARABOUM.

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PRESIDENT LAMIZANA, WHO IS ABOUT TO TOUR COUNTRYSIDE

TO RALLY SUPPORT, IS EXPECTED TO MAKE SERIES OF SPEECHES OUTLINING INTENDED ACTIONS IN VARIOUS FIELDS. SPEECHES WILL FLESH OUT POLICY OUTLINE GIVEN IN FEB 23 SPEECH (OUAGA 346).

2. SEVERAL PROMISED INSTITUTIONS, YET TO BE SET UP, WILL PROBABLY BE COVERED IN UPCOMING STATEMENTS: CREATION OF SINGLE NATIONAL MOVEMENT TO REPLACE POLITICAL PARTIES, WHOSE ACTIVITY HAS BEEN PROHIBITED; CREATION OF CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL, TO REPLACE OLD NATIONAL ASSEMBLY; AND REORGANIZATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, PROBABLY WITH INCREASED USE OF MILITARY OFFICERS.

3. ADMINISTRATIVELY, REGIME SEEMS LIKELY BE AT LEAST marginally MORE EFFECTIVE THAN PREDECESSOR. SOME OF PREVIOUS CIVILIAN MINISTERS, WHO HELD OFFICE FOR POLITICAL REASONS, WERE NON-FUNCTIONAL: AND NEW REGIME WILL BE FREE FROM MILITARY/CIVILIAN CONFLICT AND POLITICAL PARTY SQUABBLING WHICH IMMOBILIZED PREDECESSOR. REFORM OF EDUCATION HAS BEEN PROMISED BUT NOT YET IN BEING, EXCEPT FOR LENGTHENING OF ACADEMIC YEAR AND GIVING "UNIVERSITY" LABEL TO EXISTING CENTER FOR HIGHER STUDIES.

4. ECONOMICALLY, ONLY MAJOR STEP SO FAR WAS GENERAL SALARY RAISE, AVERAGING ABOUT 7PERCENT, EFFECTIVE APRIL 1. AN ESSENTIAL STEP DESIGNED TO KEEP SALARIES FROM FALLING FURTHER BEHIND INFLATION, THIS HAS NOT MADE PEOPLE ANY BETTER OFF. IT IS YET TO BE SEEN TO WHAT EXTENT UNIFICATION OF PLAN AND AGRICULTURE MINISTRIES WILL LEAD TO FASTER DEVELOPMENT OF ECONOMIC PROJECTS. PREVIOUS REGIME WAS UNABLE EFFECTIVELY COPE WITH PROBLEMS OF MOBILIZING GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE FOR DEVELOPMENT. NEW REGIME MAY DO SOMEWHAT BETTER BUT WE QUESTION WHETHER IT CAN MAKE QUANTUM JUMP WHICH IS NEEDED.

5. UPPER VOLTA'S ESSENTIAL UNDERLYING PROBLEM CONTINUES TO BE NEED TO RECOVER FROM SIX YEARS OF DROUGHT, PLUS DECADES OF POOR LAND USE AND OF HUMAN/

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LIVESTOCK PRESSURE ON LAND. EMERGENCY PICTURE -- SURVIVAL -- APPEARS RELATIVELY GOOD, BUT LONG-TERM DEVELOPMENT IS VERY DIFFICULT JOB, COMPLICATED BY POPULATION GROWTH AND ANNUAL UNCERTAINTY ABOUT RAINS. A PARTICULARLY DIFFICULT ISSUE IS NEED FOR RANGE MANAGEMENT IN COUNTRY WHERE LACK OF RURAL LAND-OWNERSHIP SYSTEM SEEMS TO REMOVE INCENTIVE FOR HERDSMEN TO RESTRICT OVERGRAZING. (FOR FULLER DISCUSSION OF

DROUGHT AND DEVELOPMENT SEE OUAGA 115,794.)

6. REGIME HAS NOT YET TAKEN ANY DISCERNABLE NEW INITIATIVES IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS. PERHAPS LITTLE NEW IS TO BE EXPECTED, SINCE PREVIOUS REGIME HAD ALREADY GIVEN MORE PROGRESSIVE" LOOK TO VOLTAN FOREIGN POLICY BY BROADENING RELATIONS WITH COMMUNIST COUNTRIES, BREAKING WITH ISRAEL AND MODEST SHIFT IN VOTING RECORD AT UN (SEE OUAGA 115).

7. REGIME CONFRONTS LACK OF POPULAR ENTHUSIASM DATING FROM TIME OF MILITARY TAKEOVER. IN MARCH REGIME SENT MILITARY OFFICERS INTO COUNTRYSIDE TO EXPLAIN WHY NEW REGIME TOOK OVER, IN UNSUCCESSFUL ATTEMPT REMEDY THIS. IN ADDITION, MUCH OF INTELLIGENTSIA IS OPPOSED TO MILITARY REGIME; AND LABOR UNIONS ARE VERY COOL TOWARD REGIME, TAKING WAIT-AND-SEE STANCE WHICH COULD SLIDE INTO OPPOSITION. THUS FAR NEITHER THESE ELEMENTS NOR THE OUSTED POLITICIANS CONSTITUTE A PROBLEM FOR REGIME, BUT CONTINUED LACK OF SUPPORT IN ALL THESE AREAS COULD LEAD TO FUTURE PROBLEMS.

8. REGIME HAS NOT YET GONE FAR IN DEFINING ITS IDEOLOGICAL CONTENT (UPCOMING SPEECHES MAY DO SO). YOUNGER OFFICERS (E.G. TIENTARABOUM) ARE KNOWN TO DESIRE EMULATE "AUTHENTICITY" OF MOBUTU AND EYADEMA. THIS HAS BEEN REFLECTED IN SOME OF LAMIZANA'S STATEMENTS, INCLUDING CALL FOR VOLTAIZATION OF PRIVATE FIRMS AND FOR REPLACEMENT OF FOREIGN (MAINLY FRENCH) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PERSONNEL WITH VOLTANS. YET LAMIZANA AND SOME OTHER LEADING MILITARY FIGURES ARE BASICALLY CONSERVATIVE AND FOREIGN INVESTMENT TARGETS FOR AFRICANIZATION ARE SMALL.
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9. GIVEN LAMIZANA'S BASIC MODERATION, ONE WOULD EXPECT YOUNG PROGRESSIVE OFFICERS LIKE TIENTARABOUM TO SEEK TO REPLACE HIM SOONER OR LATER. SUCH AN EFFORT WOULD APPEAR UNLIKELY TO OCCUR BEFORE TWO OR THREE YEARS HAVE PASSED. LEADING SENIOR OFFICERS (WHO BEGAN CAREERS IN PRE-INDEPENDENCE FRENCH ARMY) CAN BE EXPECTED TO SUPPORT LAMIZANA AGAINST SUCH AN ATTEMPT. PRESENT SENIOR NCO'S ARE MAINLY OLD TYPES LOYAL TO SENIOR OFFICERS. THESE NCO'S ARE APPROACHING RETIREMENT AGE AND THEIR DEPARTURE OVER NEXT FEW YEARS WILL ENHANCE CHANCES FOR ACTION BY YOUNGER OFFICERS. IN MEANTIME SUCH OFFICERS MAY SEEK TO STRENGTHEN THEIR LINKS TO THE PEOPLE BY TAKING ACTIVE ROLE IN PROJECTED SINGLE PARTY. BULLEN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, QUARTERLY REPORTS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 APR 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974OUAGAD00859
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: DG ALTERED
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740101-0015
From: OUAGADOUGOU
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t1974048/aaaaagtr.tel
Line Count: 169
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: OUAGA 115, 346
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 APR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23 APR 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <26 FEB 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: QUARTERLY REPORT ON VOLTAN SITUATION
TAGS: PINT, PDEV, EGEN, UV
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005